

Montana Economy at a Glance

Occupations A to Z Spotlight on Carpenters

by Julie O'Connor and Robert C. Marvin

In Montana, employment for carpenters is projected to grow much faster than the statewide average for all occupations. More than four thousand new carpentry jobs are projected to be created between 2002 and 2012, totalling 409 new jobs per year, and making carpentry the number one occupation in terms of the most job openings due to growth.

With an annual total of 618 job openings per year and an above average median salary, carpentry is poised to be one of the most important occupations in Montana's economy. This article will describe the job of a carpenter in detail, including specialties, educational requirements, apprenticeship programs, and wages.

Carpentry	
Annual Median Salary	\$30,690
2002 Employment (Estimated)	12,832
2012 Employment*	16,925
Employment Growth Percentage*	31.9%
Annual Openings*	618
Annual Openings Due to Growth*	409
Annual Openings Due to Replacements*	209
*Projected	

What Does a Carpenter Do?

Simply put, carpenters cut, fit, and assemble wood and other materials to construct buildings. But there's more to it than that. Many carpenters specialize in certain types of tasks. Montana's apprenticeship training program breaks the profession down into five major occupations:

✂ Carpenter:

General carpenters must learn to perform all the tasks of carpentry. They refer to blueprints and receive instructions from supervisors. From these they determine the dimensions of the building and the materials to be used. Next, they lay out, measure, and mark the wood or other materials, using measuring tapes and squares. Then carpenters cut or shape the wood, and assemble it using hand and power tools. General carpenters also install components that were built off-site and must be able to build these components from scratch.

✂ Acoustical Carpenter:

Mounts acoustical tile to walls and ceilings of buildings to reduce reflection of sound and to decorate room.

✂ Maintenance Carpenter:

Builds, repairs, and installs counters, cabinets, benches, partitions, floors, doors, building framework, and trim, using carpenter's handtools and power tools.

✂ Mold Carpenter:

Constructs and repairs wooden brick-and-tile molds and patterns or constructs wooden forms for molding concrete mixtures in manufacture of concrete products.

✂ Pile Driver:

Sets up power and hand tools necessary to prepare specific pilings. Performs site preparation for installation of various concrete and wood structures. Builds the form work for concrete structure.

How Do Carpenters Learn Their Trade?

A high school degree is almost always required to work as a carpenter. You should take courses in high school that prepare you to earn a high school diploma. This includes courses in English, math, science, and social studies. You also need to take courses in physical education, health, drafting and applied arts. Qualifications for entry into the apprentice program include:

Qualifications for Apprenticeship

- ✂ 18 years of age or older
- ✂ High school diploma or GED
- ✂ Physical ability to perform the duties required by the occupation
- ✂ Mechanical aptitude
- ✂ A strong math background is not required, but necessary for course work completion

Currently the Apprenticeship and Training Program has 990 registered apprentices working in 53 different apprenticeable occupations. Approximately 85% of all Montana apprentices are working in construction related occupations. In Montana, many employers require apprenticeship training for carpenters. However, some carpenters learn their skills through informal on-the-job training or by taking courses at community colleges or trade schools. Four-year apprenticeship programs are available. Check with one of the following locations:

Montana Carpenter Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee
PO Box 9463, Missoula, MT 59807 (406) 549-8067

Billings Carpenter Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee
530 South 27th Street, Billings, MT 59101 (406) 259-6911

Montana Department of Labor and Industry
Workforce Services Division, Apprenticeship and Training Program
PO Box 1728, Helena, MT 59624-1728 (406) 444-4100

How Much Does a Carpenter Earn?

In Montana, the median wage for carpenters, as of May 2003, is \$30,690 annually, which equals \$2,558 monthly, or \$14.75 per hour. Half earn between \$26,570 and \$36,360 per year (between \$2,214 and \$3,030 monthly, or \$12.77 and \$17.48 hourly). Carpenters in Montana State Government earn between \$29,748 and \$31,740 (\$2,479 and \$2,645 monthly, or \$14.30 and \$15.26 hourly).

Earnings are seasonal and vary by location in Montana. Many carpenters are members of the union. Union workers, usually, have higher wages and benefits.

The average apprentice starts at 50% of the skilled worker pay rate, and works on a progressive pay schedule, earning at least 85% of the skilled worker rate by the last six months of the apprenticeship.

How to Find Occupational Information on R&A's website:

by Robert C. Marvin

If you liked this month's Occupations A to Z article, and are interested in a field other than carpentry, the Research & Analysis website can help you find similar information on hundreds of other occupations. Here's how it works: First, log on to our site at www.ourfactsyourfuture.org. The next step depends on the type of information you're looking for.

General Overview:

If you want a general overview of a specific occupation, try our Occupation Explorer, located under the Labor Market Info tab at the top of the page. The Occupation Explorer provides a brief description of each occupation, along with the following information:

- Employment Projections
- Wages
- Top 5 Industries of Employment
- Short-Term Employment Projections
- Occupational Licensing Requirements
- Training Programs
- Skills Used
- Tasks List
- View Similar Occupations



Other options under the Labor Market Info tab allow you to compare different occupations, industries, and geographic areas within Montana.

Employers and Training:

If you seek information on employers in your area for specific occupations, or on training programs and providers, it can also be found under the "Labor Market Info" tab. Please note that the "Find Employers" feature does not list job openings. Rather, it provides location information for specific employers.

Job Openings:

If you are searching for current job openings, use the "Quick Search," "Keyword Search," or "Title Search" features under the "Career Resource Network" tab. Each provides a different way to search America's Job Bank for employment opportunities in your area (by occupational category, keyword, and job title, respectively). Alternately, you can use our link (in the sidebar under "Links") to Montana Job Source.

Job Projections:

Wondering how many job openings are expected in your field in the future? Simply click the "Data Analysis" tab at the top of the page, and select Occupation Employment Projections from the drop-down menu., select an occupation and the data series you wish to view. The Workforce Informer System will create a custom report for you.

Tip:

You can view more than one data series at the same time. Simply hold down the control key as you click on the series you wish to view.

Our current projections extend to 2012, but if you only need to see projections for the immediate future, you can instead select "Short-Term Occupational Employment Projections," to view projections through 2005.

Wages:

Looking for a higher-paying line of work? Want to find out if you're making as much as you should be for your occupation in your geographic area? If so, choose "Wages" from the drop-down menu on the "Data Analysis" tab.

(continued on back page.)

How To Find Occupational Information at ourfactsyourfuture.org (cont.)

If you'd rather view the complete listings of Job Projections or Wages, instead of selecting a specific occupation, see our publications section. From our home page, go to the sidebar and click "Publications." Select R&A Publications from the drop-down menu. Scroll Down to "Links Publications Back Issues" and select either "Job Projections" or "Prevailing Wage."

Licensing and Apprenticeship:
"Occupation Explorer" will give you some basic information on licensing requirements for Montana occupations, but if you need more detailed information (i.e. licensing fees, renewal deadlines, and how to contact the licensing board), you'll want to follow our link to the Montana Career Resources Network (MCRN) website. You'll find the link on our sidebar under "Links." From there, look for "Publications" on the MCRN Navigation sidebar. Under "Publications," you'll find both "Licensed Occupations" and "Apprenticeable Occupations." Under each publication, you'll find a complete list of applicable occupations, as well as detailed job descriptions and a wealth of related information.

Find an Occupation:
If you don't have a specific occupation in mind, but want to find one that matches your skills and interests, click the Career Resource Network Tab. On the drop-down menu, you can select "Occupations by Skills" to choose from a list of skills used for each occupation, and to specify your preferred wages, location, and education level. If you do not know what one of the skills means, simply click or position your mouse pointer over the words for a description



Alternately, you can select "Occupations Matching Current" to see which occupations you are qualified for based on your current job experience. Our site will generate a list of matching occupations, along with some quick facts, including average hourly wage, educational requirements, and Percent Skills Match. You can also create a custom report for each occupation, or to watch a career video for some occupations. Or you can simply click the occupation name for more information. Thanks for using our site, and happy hunting!

MAIL OR E-MAIL?

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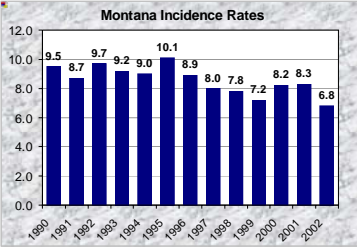
Occupations A to Z

This month's featured article is the first in a series of articles focusing on specific occupations in Montana. This month's issue features carpentry. It was chosen because it is expected to be a high growth industry in the next decade, adding more than 4,000 jobs for new entrants.

As a companion piece to this featured article, this issue also includes detailed instructions on how to find similar information for other occupations on our website. Keep reading Economy at a Glance for more Occupations A to Z articles.

Correction

The graph in June's Economy at a Glance showing occupational injury incidence rates actually compared national rates, 1990-2002. Montana's incidence rates for this period are shown below:

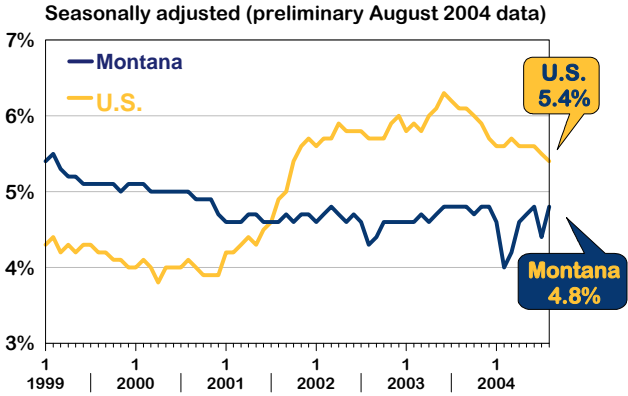


Got Questions?

If you have a specific question you'd like to ask one of the experts in the Research and Analysis Bureau, send it in or e-mail us. Please indicate it's for the "Ask an R&A Expert Column." We'll publish those we can in this monthly publication. We're also interested in hearing feedback on our publications from our customers. Please write or e-mail us with your comments or suggestions. We'd love to hear from you.

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Unemployment

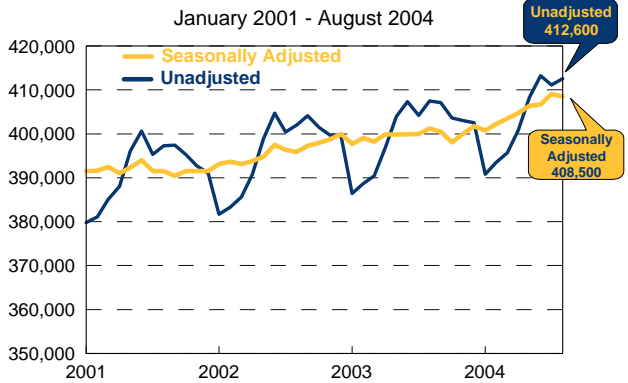


Montana's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate rose 0.5 percentage points to 4.8 percent for August, but continues to be lower than the U.S. rate of 5.4 percent.

Earnings

Average weekly earnings for workers in Montana's private sector reached \$438.90 in August, marking an over-the-year increase of 2.9%. Compare this percent change to the 2.7% over-the-year increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which is an indicator of U.S. inflation.

Nonfarm Employment Series



Montana's seasonally-adjusted, nonagricultural payroll employment was up about 7,300 jobs (1.8 percent) over the year for August. The largest over-the-year gains were in natural resources and mining, which was up by 1,100 jobs (19 percent); construction; leisure and hospitality; and trade, transportation, and utilities.

Unemployment
by County

	August 2004*	August 2003
UNITED STATES	5.4%	6.0%
MONTANA	3.9%	3.9%
Cascade **	4.2%	4.0%
Missoula **	3.2%	3.2%
Yellowstone **	3.4%	3.4%
Beaverhead	2.7%	2.7%
Big Horn	11.8%	13.3%
Blaine	5.2%	4.0%
Broadwater	3.5%	3.7%
Carbon	3.0%	3.0%
Carter	2.9%	2.5%
Chouteau	2.0%	1.8%
Custer	3.2%	2.1%
Daniels	0.8%	1.2%
Dawson	2.5%	1.7%
Deer Lodge	7.1%	5.8%
Fallon	2.4%	1.6%
Fergus	4.0%	3.3%
Flathead	4.4%	5.3%
Gallatin	1.9%	1.9%
Garfield	1.7%	0.9%
Glacier	11.7%	10.4%
Golden Valley	4.1%	5.5%
Granite	4.6%	4.0%
Hill	4.7%	3.8%
Jefferson	3.9%	3.6%
Judith Basin	3.3%	3.2%
Lake	5.7%	5.5%
Lewis & Clark	3.8%	3.4%
Liberty	2.8%	2.7%
Lincoln	10.9%	13.5%
McCone	0.6%	1.4%
Madison	1.9%	2.3%
Meagher	4.0%	4.0%
Mineral	4.8%	7.6%
Musselshell	6.3%	6.2%
Park	2.9%	3.1%
Petroleum	2.3%	3.9%
Phillips	3.3%	3.3%
Pondera	5.7%	5.3%
Powder River	2.0%	0.9%
Powell	4.8%	4.0%
Prairie	2.7%	1.4%
Ravalli	4.1%	4.2%
Richland	3.1%	3.3%
Roosevelt	10.4%	8.0%
Rosebud	6.2%	6.0%
Sanders	5.4%	6.7%
Sheridan	1.8%	2.7%
Silver Bow	4.7%	4.8%
Stillwater	2.6%	2.8%
Sweet Grass	1.5%	2.1%
Teton	2.5%	2.6%
Toole	2.6%	2.8%
Treasure	3.9%	1.8%
Valley	3.2%	2.9%
Wheatland	3.0%	2.2%
Wibaux	2.4%	2.4%

*August 2004 rate preliminary
** Cascade=Great Falls MSA
Missoula= Missoula MSA

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